



HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 6

**Quotes from Hindi and
Non-Hindi Leaders**

Thanjai Nalankilli

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Volume 6 **Quotes from Hindi and Non-Hindi Leaders**

edited by
Thanjai Nalankilli

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AUTHORS

A. P. Thangamani (3)

K. Chezian (2)

Thanjai Nalankilli (6)

Numbers in parentheses indicate number of articles by the author in this volume.

Hindi Imposition Papers

All You Wanted to Know about Hindi imposition and More

This fourteen-volumes book contains over 100 articles on the subject of Hindi imposition in India. Researchers, scholars, historians and students who want to get an in-depth understanding of India's language policy may go through these articles one by one. Others may casually browse through these volumes, stopping to read those articles that interest them. You may find lots of interesting and useful information in these articles.

Even if you are reading these articles a hundred years from now, these articles will tell you the history of the development and evolution of India's Hindi imposition policies and opposition to it, starting from 1938 to 2019. This is part of Indian history. India's language problem is an ongoing problem. We do not know where all this will lead to and how this will end.

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Preface

This volume presents a number of quotes from Hindi and non-Hindi political leaders on India's official language policy. There are truths and lies, facts and fibs; some coming from the very top of India's political leadership. They are interesting and informative.

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1.

Quotes on Hindi Imposition

Compiled by Thanjai Nalankilli

General K. M. Kariappa: "I would urge public opinion in our country (India) to manifest itself resolutely to protest strongly against any form of forcing Hindi as a national language".

C. Rajagopalachari (First Governor-General of India): "If Hindi is made the Union official language, the people of the South will not see identity of language between them and the government, but the domination of a language that is not theirs by birth but which gives to a section of the people of India the position of a ruling race". *[Mr. Rajagopalachari was an ardent supporter of "Hindi imposition" in the 1930s and 1940s. He changed his views in the 1950s.]*

Pattom Thanu Pillai (Former Chief Minister, Kerala State): "Hindi is as much alien to South Indians as English is to Indians".

(First Published: January 1999)

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2.

Two Dogs and Hindi

A Tale from the Speeches of C. N. Annadurai

K. Chezian

I have heard the story "Two Dogs and Hindi" many times during my college days. The story was attributed to former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister (1967-1969) C. N. Annadurai. I am unable to track down a published version of the story. Some of Annadurai's speeches were never published. It is possible the story was published in one of the magazines he edited (He edited or published the Tamil magazines Dravidanadu, Kanchi and Malai Mani, and English magazines Homeland and Home Rule at various points of time.) Copies of those magazines from the 1950s and 1960s are hard to find these days. Irrespective of whether Mr. Annadurai told this story or not, this story drives home the irrationality of arguments for making Hindi the link language of India. Here is the story.

A man had two dogs - a big one and a small one. He wanted his dogs to go in and out of the house freely without him having to keep the house door open all the time. So he built two "trap doors" - one big trap door for the big dog and one small for the small dog. Neighbors who saw these two doors laughed at him and called him an idiot. Why put a big door and a small door? All that was needed was the big door. Both the big and the small dog could use it!

Indian government's arguments for making Hindi the official or link language of India are as ridiculous as the need for a big door and a small door for the big dog and the small dog. Indian government agrees that English is needed for communication with the world, and every school in India teaches English at some grade or other before one passes the high school. Why do people outside the Hindi states have to study Hindi for communications within India while they already study English for communication with the world? Use English for communications within India and outside India. Let both the small dog and the large dog use the big door. Let people use English for communication within India and with outside world.

[NOTE: I have also heard that the story of two dogs and two trap doors was first told by the renowned scientist Sir Isaac Newton, without any reference to Hindi of course. This may or may not be true. It is quite possible that C. N. Annadurai or someone else adapted the story to point out the ridiculousness of the Indian government asking non-Hindi peoples to study Hindi in addition to English. Whatever the origin of the story, the story is worth publishing.]

A FEW MORE QUOTES from C. N. ANNADURAI

"We will go to every part of Tamil Nadu and tell the people that Hindi is coming and that it is like a thunder strike on the heads of Tamil and Dravidian people.... If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens". (Public Meeting on April 29, 1963 at Chennai Marina)

"Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region)... This and future generations in non-Hindi areas will suffer immeasurable hardships... Making Hindi the official language of India would destroy the age old language and culture of Tamil Nadu". (At his trial on December 5, 1963, accused of conspiracy to burn the Indian Constitution)

(First Published: January 1999)

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3.

Four Quotes on Hindi Imposition from Indian Constituent Assembly Members

Compiled by Thanjai Nalankilli

1. Seth Govind Das

Seth Govind Das, from the Hindi belt region, was a staunch supporter of making Hindi the official language of India. Here is what he said in 1949:

"For thousands of years one and the same culture has all along been obtaining here.... It is in order to maintain this tradition that we want one language and one script for the whole country."

2. Sardar Hukam Singh

Sardar Hukam Singh, from Punjab, supported Hindi as the official language initially but he changed his mind later. This is what he had to say in 1949: "I am one of those who have withdrawn their support from Hindi simply because of the fanaticism and intolerance of those who support it".

[EDITORIAL NOTE: (1) People of Punjab do not particularly object to Hindi as the official language because of the geographical proximity of Punjab to the Hindi region and some familiarity with Hindi.]

3. Krishnaswamy Bharathi

L. Krishnaswamy Bharathi, from Tamil Nadu, was against making Hindi the official language of India but he voted for the constitution to obey the Congress Party dictate. He regretted it later and wrote against Hindi imposition in later years. This is what he had to say in the 1960s:

"In this country (India) of continental size with 13 different main territorial languages, no single language needs to be considered essential for all the 44 crores of people, nor is it practical or feasible. [44 crores = 440 million; Population statistics mentioned by Mr. Bharathi reflect the data in the 1960s.]

It is true that for administration of the Union Government (Indian Central Government) we want a language. Whereas the Hindi-speaking group wants Hindi to be the official language of India, the non-Hindi group opposes it because we do not wish to give a superior status to what is admittedly only a regional language. **To allow Hindi to sit on the throne in Delhi as sole monarch is patently discriminatory and will have the effect of reducing the non-Hindi people to second-rate citizens.**

The very fact that Hindi is there in the constitution as the official language of the India is enough imposition; to say that no one is imposing it on others has no meaning whatever. That they are going slow with Hindi is no consolation."

4. R.V. Dhulekar

R.V. Dhulekar made the following statement at the Indian Constitutional assembly on December 10, 1946) [Constitution Assembly Debates-Official Report, Volume 1 (p 26-27), Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1988]

"People who do not know Hindustani have no right to stay in India. People who are present in this House to fashion a Constitution for India and do not know Hindustani are not worthy to be members of this Assembly. They had better leave."

(First Published: January 2006)

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4.

Eleven Arrogant Things Hindi Politicians Said (Hindi Imposition, Zealousness, Extremism, Ignorance and Arrogance)

Thanjai Nalankilli

Here are some quotes from Hindi politicians and "intellectuals" about Hindi imposition (making Hindi the official, link or national language of India) and our brief retorts. You will see in some of these quotes chauvinism, zealousness, extremism, ignorance, arrogance and an imperial attitude.

These are not uneducated people. One was Prime Minister of India, one was Home Minister of India, one was Chief Minister of the largest state in India, one was a state governor, two were members of the Indian constitution assembly, two were Hindi writers including one recipient of Padmashree Award, one of the highest honors bestowed by the Indian government. Yet they have all made factually wrong statements. Are they ignorant or thought that people would believe their false utterances because of their high positions?

1)

"For thousands of years one and the same culture has all along been obtaining here.... It is in order to maintain this tradition that we want one language and one script for the whole country." - Seth Govind Das, Constitution Assembly member (in 1949)

Our Comment: Presumably the "country" he was referring to is the post-British India created in 1947. Never once in all history was there a single language that was spoken or understood in all these territories comprising India. At the time of this speech in 1949, very few people in the southern region of the country understood Hindi or Hindustani.

2)

"People who do not know Hindustani have no right to stay in India. People who are present in this House to fashion a Constitution for India and do not know Hindustani are not worthy to be members of this Assembly. They had better leave." - R.V. Dhulekar (speaking at the Indian Constitutional assembly on December 10, 1946) [Constitution Assembly Debates-Official Report, Volume 1 (p 26-27), Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1988]

Our Comment: As stated in Section 1 above, at the time of this speech in 1946, very few people in the southern region of the country understood Hindi or Hindustani. If we were to follow Mr. Dhulekar statement that "those who do not know Hindustani are not worthy to be members of this Assembly", the entire south would have no say in the formulation of the Indian constitution. If we are to follow Mr. Dhulekar's dictate, "People who do not know Hindustani have no right to stay in India", how can we deport about half the population, numbering into a few hundred million people, and to where? The practical solution then is to separate the southern region into a separate country.

3)

"Official work should be done in Hindi so that people can understand the matters which are related to them". - Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav. (DNA India website, September 14, 2013)

Our Comment: *We agree with Mr. Yadav if he is talking of Uttar Pradesh State, but we disagree if he is talking of India. Yadav is a proponent that India's official language should be Hindi and non-Hindi peoples should learn Hindi. When Yadav was the Chief Minister of the Hindi speaking state of Uttar Pradesh he used to send correspondence to chief ministers of non-Hindi states in Hindi.*

4)

"The biggest mistake that we made post-independence was not to make Hindi the national language. Had that happened, the country wouldn't have been divided into so many parts." - Naresh Agarwal, A senior Samajwadi Party leader (IBN Live website, November 18, 2013)

Our Comment: *Hindi is a divisive force and not a unifying force in India. Tamil Nadu students' January 1965 demonstrations against making Hindi the official language of India were larger than any demonstration in Tamil Nadu against British rule. Indian Government had to rush army into Tamil Nadu because police could not put down the demonstrations. Army and police shot and killed over 60 demonstrators in January-February 1965.*

5)

"Hindi was naturally accepted as the link-language before 1947 but became a subject of controversy after independence." - Lal Krishna Advani (L. K. Advani), Home Minister of India (at a meeting honoring the Hindi writer Govind Misra in New Delhi) (Rediff on the Net, December 21, 1998)

Our Comment: *Opposition to Hindi imposition started when Hindi was made a subject in Tamil Nadu schools in 1938 (that was nine years before 1947). [Foot Note: Tamil Nadu was part of the Madras Province in 1938.]*

6)

"If Hindi were announced as the official language immediately after independence, there would have been no opposition to it." - Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Dinamani, February 12, 2000)

Our Comment: *See our comment in Section 5.*

7)

"Anti-Hindi people have tried their best to make it just a link-language in India, but they would never succeed because it is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people." - Padamshree Giriraj Kishore (Times of India, September 15, 2013)

Our Comment: *The so called "anti-Hindi people", that includes almost the entire population of Tamil Nadu state, rose up against making Hindi the official or link language of India and sacrificed blood (over 60 shot and killed in 1965). Kishore talks of Hindi being rooted in the hearts of the people". What people? Hindi people? Yes. Tamil people? "No". Absolutely "no". Hindi is not in the hearts of Tamil people at all. What they have is a bitter taste of the spilled blood of 1965. May be, to Padmashree Kishore, people means Hindi people and others do not count. [Foot Note: Padmashree is one of the highest honours awarded by the Indian Government.]*

8)

"Hindi united India during freedom struggle. Today it has become divisive." - Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (speaking at a function in New Delhi) (Dinakaran (Tamil daily), December 21, 2003)

Our Comment: *Hindi did not play any role in the independence movement (against British rule) in southern India. All communications with people were in local languages because very few southerners understood Hindi. Whenever northern leaders came to southern India, most of them spoke in English and was translated to the local language and the few who did not know English spoke in Hindi and was translated to the local language. Had meetings been addressed in Hindi, no one would have attended those meetings. Also, almost all communications between southern and northern leaders were in English.*

9)

"The battle of independence was fought and won through Hindi." - Badri Narain Tiwari (a Hindi author) (Times of India, September 15, 2013)

Our Comment: *Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. See Comments in Section 8.*

10)

"All the great leaders and revolutionaries of any religion or state used Hindi in the freedom struggle." - Badri Narain Tiwari (a Hindi author) (Times of India, September 15, 2013)

Our Comment: *By this one sweeping sentence, Mr. Tiwari negated all the sacrifices of South Indian leaders who fought against British rule; none of them used Hindi to communicate with people.*

11)

"A nation is "incomplete" without its national language. The identity of India is "incomplete" without Hindi." - Haryana State Governor Kaptan Singh Solanki (India Today; January 120, 2017)

Our Comment: *A multi-lingual country like India should have multiple national languages. Otherwise people of one language will rule all of the country. We do not want to be part of such a country.*

(First Published: April 2014)

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5. Vajpayee's Big Lie about Hindi and Annadurai

K. Chezhan

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

MDMK - Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

PMK - Pattali Makkal Katchi

1. Introduction

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wants to make inroads into Tamil Nadu. The problem is that BJP's origin as well as its heart and soul are Hindi-centered, and Tamil Nadu, located in the extreme south of the Indian subcontinent, is staunchly against the imposition of Hindi language and culture from the Hindi heartland. Though leaders of Tamil-centered parties such as AIADMK, DMK, MDMK and PMK have made political alliances with BJP for various temporary, transient political reasons, the rank and file of these parties look at it with suspicion and have not accepted it as their own. They consider BJP as a Hindi-centered party because of the latter's advocacy of Hindi as the official language of India and its attempts to propagate Aryan and Hindi culture and values into this "Dravidian" land.

In order to soften the resistance of the rank and file of the Tamil-centered parties, BJP tries to propagate a lie among these party cadres that the elder statesman of Tamil-centered political parties, the founder of DMK, the late Mr. C. N. Annadurai was not against Hindi and so, by extension, the current rank and file of the Tamil-centered parties should not oppose Hindi as the official language either. Most of these cadres have not been born or were very young when Annadurai passed away in 1969. BJP leaders seem to

think that they can distort Annadurai's views on Hindi and sway the rank and file of the Tamil-centered parties away from opposition to Hindi as the official language of India.

2. Prime Minister Vajpayee Distorts the Truth

Speaking at a public rally in Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu, BJP leader, Prime Minister Vajpayee said in September 1998, "Annadurai was not anti-Hindi. His views on the language policy need to be understood in a proper perspective." Vajpayee recalled that in 1965, Annadurai in the course of his comments on Hindi had said in the Upper House of Parliament, "What is our objection to Hindi? I want it to be very plain and very frank. We have no objection to any language. Especially when I hear my friend Vajpayee speaking, I think this is a very good language" (Express News service; September 16, 1998). Of course, Annadurai was not against Hindi. I am not against Hindi. I doubt if any Tamil is against Hindi. No, Annadurai was not against Hindi but he was against Hindi imposition, he was against making Hindi the official language of India over and above Tamil and other languages. Hindi is a language like any other language, like Chinese, like German, like Italian, or any other language. We are not against any of these languages. Let Chinese flourish in China. Let German flourish in Germany. Let Italian flourish in Italy. Similarly let Hindi flourish in Hindi land (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, etc.) We have nothing against that. What we oppose, what Annadurai opposed, was making Hindi the official language of India over and above all other languages. Sure, Annadurai said that Hindi was a very good language. Does it mean that it qualifies to be the official language of India over and above Tamil and other languages? We will quote his own words and answer that later in this article.

Annadurai had written dozens of articles and made scores of speeches against making Hindi the official language of India. If I were to compile them all, it would take a couple of thousand pages. Let me present here a few excerpts from his speeches (Transcripts of these speeches are available in newspapers of that time and in some court records). That would suffice to expose Prime Minister Vajpayee's lie about Annadurai's position on Hindi.

3. Annadurai's 1963 Speech

Speaking at a Public Meeting on April 29, 1963 at Chennai Marina (Madras Marina) organized to oppose Hindi becoming the official language of India from January 26, 1965, Annadurai said, **"We will go to every part of Tamil Nadu and tell the people that Hindi is coming and that it is like a thunder strike on the heads of Tamil and Dravidian people.... If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens"**.

What do you have to say about this, Mr. Vajpayee? Was Annadurai opposed to Hindi as the official language?

4. Burning the Indian Constitution

Annadurai convened a "Hindi Opposition Conference" (Inthi Ethirpu Maanaadu) on October 13, 1963. There he announced that DMK leaders would burn the 17-th part of the Indian Constitution to show their opposition to making Hindi the official language of India. The seventeenth part of the constitution specifies that Hindi would be the official language of India. (Tell me, Mr. Vajpayee, is it an indication that Annadurai accepted Hindi as the official language of India?)

Annadurai announced to the press and the people that he would be among the first group of five people to burn the constitution at 4 PM on November 17, 1963 at the Chennai Marina (Madras Marina). To prevent them from burning the constitution, police arrested him and the four others in the group on November 16. They were charged with conspiring to burn the Constitution of India.

5. Annadurai's Speech at the Trial

Annadurai was brought to trial on December 5, 1963 for conspiracy to burn the Indian Constitution. Speaking in his defense, Annadurai said, **"Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region).... This and future generations in non-Hindi areas will suffer immeasurable hardships... Making Hindi the official language of India would destroy the age old language and culture of Tamil Nadu"**.

Prime Minister Vajpayee said in his 1998 speech in Chennai that Annadurai said that Hindi was a very good language. Obviously so, but what has it to do with Hindi becoming the official language of India? (There are many good languages in the world!) Did Annadurai think that it qualifies Hindi to become the official language of India? This was what he said, under oath, at the trial: "Hindi is not a fully developed language and it is not fit for any special status over the other India national languages".

The Judge sentenced him to 6 months imprisonment. In the months to come, number of other DMK leaders burnt the 17-th part of the constitution at various places in Tamil Nadu. They were all arrested and receive jail sentences ranging from one to six months.

6. January 26, 1965: A Day of Mourning

Hindi would become the official language of India on January 26, 1965. DMK announced that this day would be observed as a Day of Mourning and asked all party leaders and cadres to wear black shirts, black blouses or black ribbons, and raise black flags throughout Tamil Nadu. Annadurai was arrested on the night of January 25. But someone in his house did raise a black flag over the house the next morning. Black flags flew over the houses of every DMK leader and many cadres on January 26, 1965 because Hindi became the official language of India on that day.

7. The Postage Stamp Incidence

DMK won the 1967 election in Tamil Nadu and Annadurai was sworn in as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister on March 6, 1967. In 1968 Tamil Nadu hosted the Second International Tamil Conference in Chennai (Madras). The Indian government issued a special postage stamp to commemorate the occasion. The stamp was to be released at the conference. Just before the release, Annadurai found out that the stamp would contain both Hindi and English inscriptions (as is usual with all Indian stamps). He was offended that Hindi inscriptions would be there on a stamp issued to commemorate a Tamil conference. He refused to release the stamp. The stamp was never released officially. Now, tell us, Mr. Vajpayee, did Annadurai accept Hindi as the official language of India?

8. Concluding Remarks

In spite of all the opposition to Hindi in Tamil Nadu, Hindi continues to be the official language of India and is being imposed on the people of Tamil Nadu. Governments have changed in New Delhi and Chennai. But Hindi imposition continues! Power at the center (New Delhi) and state (Chennai/Madras) has changed hands from one party to another, to another but there is no letdown in Hindi imposition.

If Prime Minister Vajpayee and other BJP leaders want to win the hearts of the Tamil people, instead of resorting to misrepresentations as Prime Minister Vajpayee did, they should introduce a constitutional amendment in parliament deleting the 17-th Part of the Constitution (that was what Annadurai wanted; that was why he asked his party leaders to burn the constitution in 1963), and change the constitution to make English the sole official language of India until the time, if ever, it is possible to make all national languages the official language of India (that was Annadurai's position). [We have strong reservation if the two dozens or so national languages could ever be effectively made the official language of India. If it is not possible, then English should remain the official language. As Annadurai said, "Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region)... If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens".] If BJP's constitutional amendment fails in the parliament, well and good. We will credit BJP for introducing the amendment.

If we are to support the BJP until it changes its position on Hindi and demonstrates it by solid deeds as noted in the previous paragraph, that would be an insult to the memory of Annadurai and all those who gave their lives, lost their limbs or went to jail heeding his call to come out and fight Hindi imposition and domination.

(First Published: January 2000)

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6.

Prime Minister Vajpayee Distorts Annadurai's Anti-Hindi Imposition Views Again

A.P. Thangamani

In September 1998 Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said at a public meeting in Chennai (Madras) that former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai (popularly known as Arinjar Anna) did not oppose making Hindi the official language of India. In Chapter 5 of this Volume, Chezian exposed this misinformation by quoting extensively from Annadurai's speeches as well as referring to many actions he took before and after he became the Chief Minister. If anyone has any doubt that Annadurai opposed Hindi as the official language of India, read that chapter. It would convince anyone.

Yet Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee continues to utter this lie again and again. In a speech made in New Delhi on February 1, 2000, Vajpayee again said that Annadurai did not oppose Hindi as the official language. He explained that after one of Vajpayee's Hindi speeches in the upper house of the Indian Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Annadurai told him "if Vajpayee's Hindi is adopted as the national language, we will have no problem."

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is trying to fool Tamil people into thinking that C. N. Annadurai did not oppose Hindi as the national language (or official language) on the basis of the above-mentioned compliment to Vajpayee's speech. What Annadurai told Vajpayee ("If Vajpayee's Hindi is adopted as the national language, we will have no problem.") is a compliment to Vajpayee, praise to Vajpayee's eloquence in Hindi, and NOT a policy statement that he had changed his mind and was willing to accept Hindi as the national language or official language. His speeches and actions over the next several years (until his death in 1969) are testaments to his opposition to Hindi until his death (see Reference 1). None but an utterly naive person would take that Annadurai's praise of Vajpayee's eloquence in Hindi as Annadurai's acceptance of Hindi as national or official language of India.

If a man says, "I am so hungry I can eat a horse", it does not mean that he is willing to eat a whole horse (or even a few ounces of horse meat). Only a fool would take it that way and serve him horse meat. That statement ("I am so hungry I can eat a horse") says two things about that man: (1) He was very hungry, and (2) He does not eat nor like eating horse meat. He is conveying that he was very hungry by saying that he may even eat a horse which he despises (or which is totally out of his character.) It is in such a way any reasonable person would understand Annadurai's praise of Vajpayee's speech. It conveys two things: (1) Annadurai was very impressed with Vajpayee's eloquence in Hindi, and (2) Annadurai was opposed to Hindi as the national language and it was totally out of his character to accept it as such. If Vajpayee cannot understand this, we have to wonder if he is intelligent enough to be the Prime Minister of a country. Whether he is intelligent enough to be the Prime Minister or not, I am certain that he is intelligent enough to understand what Annadurai meant. In my opinion Vajpayee thinks that Tamil people are

fools and would buy this lie that Annadurai did not oppose Hindi as India's official or national language.

Here is yet another example. If a woman says, "Food in that restaurant is so delicious, I could kill for it", no one with even a little bit of brain would think that she is going to kill. Yet Prime Minister Vajpayee tries to convince Tamil people that Annadurai's praise for eloquence as Annadurai's acceptance of Hindi. Either Vajpayee is an idiot or he thinks that Tamil people are idiots to believe him. In my opinion Vajpayee is no an idiot, he is just a scoundrel who tries to fool the Tamil people.

To make sure that people do not believe Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's false statement and think that Annadurai changed his mind after hearing Vajpayee's eloquence in Hindi and accepted Hindi as the national or official language of India, I end this article with couple of actions Annadurai undertook **AFTER** he said to Vajpayee that "if Vajpayee's Hindi is adopted as the national language, we will have no problem." Vajpayee did not mention when (year?) Annadurai said this, other than that this occurred when both Annadurai and Vajpayee were members of the Indian Parliament. Annadurai was a member of parliament (Rajyasabha) during 1962-1967. He became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu State on March 6, 1967 (by then he was no longer a member of parliament). Here are couple of Annadurai's actions as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

He ordered that Hindi no longer be taught in schools under Tamil Nadu State jurisdiction. Is this the action of a man who had accepted Hindi as the national or official language of India (because he was so impressed with Mr. Vajpayee's eloquent Hindi speech)?

In 1968 Tamil Nadu State hosted the Second International Tamil Conference. Indian Government issued a stamp on this occasion. When Annadurai found out that there were Hindi inscriptions on the stamp, he angrily cancelled the issuance of the stamp at the conference. Do you need any more proof that Annadurai opposed Hindi as the national or official language of India?

(First Published: August 2003)

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7.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Distorted History of Hindi in India

A. P. Thangamani

1. Introduction

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is yet again propagating false information about Hindi and Tamil Nadu, and distorting history. (Some earlier false statement by the Prime Minister were discussed in other chapters of this volume). Is the Prime Minister telling these falsehoods under the "theory" espoused by Hitler's Propaganda Minister Goebbels: "Invent a lie and repeat it often enough and it becomes the truth, no matter what the facts actually are"? Or, was the Prime Minister really ignorant of the recent history of India?

In December 2003, speaking at a seminar on "The national movement, Hindi and Gandhi" in New Delhi, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee propagated some false information. We will briefly examine them here.

2. Falsehood 1: "Hindi was the Language of Unity during the Freedom Struggle against British Rule"

Prime Minister Vajpayee said that "Hindi was the language of unity in the freedom struggle" against British rule. False, totally false. It was English that linked those who opposed and fought the British rule from various regions of the Indian Subcontinent. Very few in the Congress Party or the freedom movement from Tamil Nadu (or Southern India) knew Hindi. The language of most communication between north and south was English; not Hindi.

3. Falsehood 2: "Hindi is a Symbol of National Unity"

Vajpayee said that, "Hindi is a symbol of national unity". Nonsense. Hindi is one of the most divisive elements in India. During the deliberations on the Indian Constitution, no other subject met more heated debate than the provision making Hindi the official language of India. Feelings between Hindi zealots and most members from Tamil Nadu were so heated that discussion of official language provision in the constitution was postponed until the very end. Calling Hindi a symbol of national unity is wrong.

Even after Hindi was crowned the official language of India by the constitution, opposition to Hindi continued in **southern and northeastern states**. It was by no means limited to Tamil Nadu although it was possibly an order of magnitude more intense in Tamil Nadu than anywhere else. General K. M. Kariappa, from Karnataka State, said, "I would urge public opinion in our country to manifest itself resolutely to protest strongly against any form of forcing Hindi as a national language". Is it an indication that Hindi is

a symbol of national unity? Pattom Thanu Pillai, former Chief Minister of Kerala State, said, "Hindi is as much alien to South Indians as English is to Indians".

There were **anti-Hindi Imposition Agitations** almost every year from 1938 to 1965 in Tamil Nadu [Volume3, Chapter 1]. The popular rebellion against Hindi imposition spearheaded by Tamil Nadu students in January-February 1965 was put down with force bringing in large numbers of police from other states and Indian army soldiers. When the agitation was crushed by brutal force after 19 days, the death toll was over 60. Number of protesters on the anti-Hindi marches on a single day, January 25, 1965 was higher than the total number of people who participated in demonstrations against British rule in all through the independence struggle against British rule in Tamil Nadu. Mr. Vajpayee, are these events any indication that "Hindi is a symbol of national unity"?

In the year 2000, a Manipur rebel group **banned Hindi movies and television shows** in Manipur because they were destroying the Manipuri culture and language. Movie theatres and cable television operators obliged. The rebel group also burnt several thousand videocassettes of Hindi films as a protest against the "Indianization" of Manipur [Reuters News, December 6, 2000; Rediff on the Net, October 31, 2000].

In 2017, Kannadiga (Kannada speakers) protesters demonstrated against Hindi signs at Namma Metro (Our Metro) in Bengaluru City, Karnataka State. Under continued demonstrations, Metro authorities removed all Hindi signs from the Metro [Volume 10-Chapter11]

2017 also saw protesters in Tamil Nadu tarring Hindi names on kilometre stones along National highways (Times of India; March 31 & April 10, 2017).

So, Mr. Vajpayee, where did you get the idea that "Hindi is a symbol of national unity"? Which nation are you talking about? May be you are talking about a Hindia consisting of the Hindi heartland with all other states as its subservient colonies!)

(First Published: March 2004)

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8.

Vajpayee Distorts Anti-Hindi Imposition Feelings in Tamil Nadu

A. P. Thangamani

Abbreviations

BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

In 1998 Vajpayee claimed that former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK General-Secretary C. N. Annadurai did not oppose making Hindi the official language of India. K. Chezhan demolished that statement and exposed the utter falsehood of it in his article, "Vajpayee's Big Lie about Annadurai and Hindi" [Chapter 5 of this Volume]

In February 2000 Vajpayee uttered yet another falsity about Tamil Nadu's opposition to Hindi imposition. He said, **"If Hindi were announced the official language of India immediately after the British left, there would have been no opposition to Hindi"**. The fact of the matter is, people of Tamil Nadu opposed Hindi becoming the official language of India even before the British left India on August 15, 1947. The first anti-Hindi demonstrations took place in 1938 (nine years before the British left), soon after the Congress Government of the Madras Presidency (much of present day Tamil Nadu and parts of Andhra Pradesh) made Hindi a compulsory subject in schools [Volume 3, Chapter 3]

You see, Prime Minister Vajpayee, Tamil people are opposing Hindi imposition well before the British left the Indian subcontinent. Now do you see the falsity of your statement?

(First Published: May 2000)

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9. **Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu Makes Illogical Statements on Hindi Imposition**

Thanjai Nalankilli

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu said the following at a Hindi Divas (Hindi Day) function organized by the Indian Government on September 14, 2018 (The Hindu, September 14, 2018):

- (1) English is an “illness” left behind by the British.
- (2) It is not possible to progress in India without the Hindi language.
- (3) When the Chinese President came to India he spoke in his mother tongue. The Iranian President also spoke in his mother tongue when he was in India. One should never forget their mother tongue.
- (4) Bank and railway officials speak in English. Those who come to them don't know the language. You should speak in a language that people know, we have not made any effort in this regard.

Here is our response to the Vice-President:

- (A1) If English is a disease, Hindi is yet another disease being injected into the bloodstream of non-Hindi states.
- (A2) If one cannot progress in India without Hindi knowledge, is it not a blow to non-Hindi peoples and a boon to Hindi peoples? His statement justifies our demand that Hindi should not be the official language of India, and English (a language required for international communications) should be the sole link language of India until all Indian languages are made official languages of India.
- (A3) Presidents of China and Iran spoke in their mother tongues because they are from essentially uni-lingual countries. India is a multi-lingual country and Hindi should not be projected as THE Indian language to foreigners. Chinese and Iranian presidents spoke in their mother tongues. Would former president Pranab Mukherjee been allowed to give his presidential speeches in his mother tongue Bengali? No. Even ministers are not allowed to speak in parliament in any language other than English or Hindi. Former Indian minister Alagiri's request to speak in his mother tongue Tamil was denied and he never spoke in parliament because he did not know Hindi and not proficient in English. By the sway, why is Vice President Venkaiah Naidu speaking in parliament and at central government functions in New Delhi in English or Hindi instead of his mother tongue Telugu?

(A4) We agree that bank and railway officials should speak in the language of the people they serve. But Indian government does not require proficiency of the state language a requirement for employment in banks and railways; only knowledge of English and Hindi required. Many bank and railways employees do not know the state language.

(First Published: November 2018)

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10.

Hindi is not an Agent for Unity and Integration; It is an Agent for Disunity and Disintegration

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. False Statements in Support of Hindi
 - 1.1 Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee
 - 1.2 Vice President Venkaiah Naidu
 - 1.3 Minister Satyapal Singh
2. Facts and Reality

1. False Statements in Support of Hindi

1.1 Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said in 2003 that "Hindi was the language of unity in the freedom struggle" against British rule (Dinakaran Tamil Newspaper; December 21, 2003). Absolutely wrong. It was English language that connected political leaders from the different regions. If Jawaharlal Nehru addressed a public meeting in Tamil Nadu in Hindi, most people would have walked out of the meeting.

Mr. Vajpayee also said, "Hindi is a symbol of national unity". It is in fact a most divisive force in India as discussed in Section 2.

1.2 Vice President Venkaiah Naidu

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu said at the 16th annual convocation of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha in Hyderabad, that there was no element more powerful than the Hindi language to unify Indians. He added, "Hindi has played a historic role in the development of India's unity, integrity and linguistic goodwill," (Scroll.in; November 20, 2017).

1.3 Minister Satyapal Singh

Minister of State for Human Resources Development (HRD) Satyapal Singh said "Only Hindi language can unite the country." (TheNewsMinute.com; December 12, 2017)

I do not know if these learned people really believe that Hindi promotes unity or they are uttering these words hoping people would believe the falsehood. Here are the facts and reality.

2. Facts and Reality

2.1

Hindi is one of the most, if not the most, divisive element in India for the past 75 years. Hindi imposition is the cause for more protests, demonstrations and agitations than any other single subject during the past 75 years. More people participated in the 1965 Anti-Hindi Imposition protests marches on January 25 and 27, 1965 than any other protest in the history of Tamil Nadu. Opposition to Hindi is not limited to Tamil Nadu. There were large Anti-Hindi Imposition marches in the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, as well as the eastern state of West Bengal in 1965 although they were not as intensive or massive as in Tamil Nadu.

Opposition to Hindi imposition is not of the past either; it is current. Tamil Nadu state government and people have continuously and consistently opposed any act of Hindi imposition.

2.2

In 2014, the then Tamil Nadu State Chief Minister Jayalalithaa and her political rival, the 89-years old former Chief Minister Karunanidhi, both opposed a May 27, 2014 Indian Government memorandum asking employees to post in Hindi only or Hindi and English with Hindi first in Internet social media (Twitter, Facebook, Google, discussion forums, etc). Indian government backed off. (Indian Express; June 20, 2014).

2.3

English was replaced by Hindi in some signs and milestones on some National Highways in Tamil Nadu in 2017. Former Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Mr. M. K. Stalin warned that his party (DMK) would launch a statewide protest (Hindustan Times; March 31, 2017). Some people tarred Hindi on the milestones. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) issued instructions to erase Hindi from the milestones (Times of India; April 10, 2017).

2.4

Current (2019) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Etapadi Palaniswamy, addressing a public meeting remembering and honouring the martyrs of 1965 Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation, said that Hindi should not be imposed because large numbers of Indians speak Hindi. (Thinathanthi (Tamil newspaper); January 25, 2019).

2.5

Opposition is not limited to Tamil Nadu. It is alive in Karnataka too.

Indian government celebrates September 14 every year as Hindi Day (Hindi Diwas) to commemorate Hindi being declared India's official language on September 14, 1949. Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV), a pro-Kannada organization in Karnataka, called that day "Black Day" and launched statewide protests against Hindi imposition on September 14, 2018. Activists blackened Hindi letters on milestones on National Highway 48 near Davanagere and signs on other highway stretches at Yadgir, Mysuru, Kolar, Chikkaballapur and Shivamogga. (Times of India, September 14, 2018).

Karnataka also opposed placing Hindi signboards alongside Kannada and English boards at Bengaluru Metro (Bangalore Metro). Over one million people (10 lakh people) participated in an Internet campaign (via social media) to remove Hindi signs from Bengaluru Metro (news18.com; June 21, 2017). Street marches and demonstrations followed in Bengaluru until the Hindi signs were removed.

Given these incidents of protests against Hindi imposition, tell me, "Is Hindi a unifying force or a divisive force?"

(First Published: March 2019)

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11.

False Propaganda about the Need for Hindi in India

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu
3. Comparing to Germany and Japan
4. Power Finance Corporation (PFC)

1. Introduction

There is nothing special about Hindi. It is just another language in India. It is the mother tongue of more Indians than any other language. Number of Hindi people surely increases disproportionately compared to non-Hindi peoples because of uncontrolled population growth in Hindi states and because South Indians heeded to birth control messages and limited their population growth. Except for the population numbers there is nothing special about Hindi as a language. It is an equal among equals; nothing more.

Yet some Hindi enthusiasts in high places in the Indian government attribute "miracle qualities" to Hindi without any basis. They claim it is the elixir to development, way to wealth. Here are some example statements from people at high places.

2. Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu

Indian Government minister Mr. Venkaiah Naidu said in 2017, "It is impossible to progress without Hindi". (Deccan Herald; June 24, 2017). He repeated the same after becoming the Vice-President. He said in 2018, "It is not possible to progress without Hindi" (The Hindu, September 14, 2018).

If it is true, why are Hindi states amongst the most impoverished states in India? Why are South Indian states where very few people have working knowledge of Hindi among the most literate and most attractive to industrial development?

Countering similar statements in the past, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Karunanidhi used to say in the 1980s, "A beggar came to our house and said 'I am hungry, please give me some porridge and I will tell you the secret to wealth'. Hindi politicians telling us to learn Hindi in order to prosper is like that."

3. Comparing to Germany and Japan

Another false argument uttered by some Hindi-zealot politicians is, "Countries like Japan and Germany have progressed technologically and economically using their own languages, India will also progress if we use Hindi."

There is a major difference between India and the two countries mentioned. They are uni-lingual countries while India is a multi-lingual country. Mother tongue of almost all the people of Japan and Germany is Japanese and German, respectively. On the contrary, Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40% of Indians. Hindi people may benefit if Hindi is used for everything. What about the rest of Indians? Are they second-class citizens? Are they stepchildren to Mother India?

4. Power Finance Corporation (PFC)

Power Finance Corporation Limited is a Government of India Public Sector Undertaking (PSU). Its report on "Implementation of Official Language Policy" says, "We create possibility of a better tomorrow, and accordingly we are committed for dissemination and development of Hindi." (as seen on their web site on January 15, 2019)

How does dissemination and development of Hindi help create a better tomorrow for non-Hindi Indians? As a Government of India Undertaking, it is supposed to bring a better tomorrow for all Indians, and not spend time and money to help only Hindi Indians.

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